

# CATHOLIC THEATRE

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NATIONAL CATHOLIC THEATRE CONFERENCE

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President  
Sister Mary Angelita, B.V.M.

Vice-President  
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## Alpha Gamma Omega Rates NCTC Blessings

By SISTER MARY HONORA, O.P.

At just about 10:45 o'clock that brisk morning of December 28, 1956, NCTC President, Sister Mary Angelita, BVM, together with the members of the Executive Committee, entered the dignified English Walnut Room of the Congress Hotel in Chicago. An air of excitement made itself felt through the haze of smoke that characterizes college men and women at work. For indeed, no fewer than thirty-five students of Catholic theatre, carefully selected from the drama departments of twelve qualifying Catholic colleges in the nation, had gathered there to put their official signatures to the history they were in process of making. Now that moment had come.

Calmly, seriously, Dr. Earl C. Bach, Chairman of the Committee on NCTC College Activities, addressed the group:

"The National Catholic Theatre Conference was organized in 1937 and chose as its ideal the principle that Christian Art, if expertly executed, achieves the high purpose of 'giving beauty back to God.' Through the co-operation of its members the Conference has grown through the years until its pulse can be felt throughout the Theatre world in our country. To this growth and to the development of these ideals Catholic colleges have constantly contributed.

"And now, the Conference asks its College student members to further this development by the formation of the first

National Catholic College Drama Fraternity. And this is only right since the Conference firmly believes that the future of theatre in America rests with the college students of today. It is their ideals, their training in the theatre arts, their standards of production and their willingness to labor unselfishly which will shape the theatre of tomorrow.

"Too, since the National Catholic Theatre Conference aims for a theatre whose ideals are the highest, it is only fitting that it should single out the leaders in College Theatre to go out and spread these aims.

"You are Tomorrow's NCTC!

"Will the Charter members please rise.

"You who have been chosen to form the Charter membership of this first Drama Fraternity not only appreciate the honor which comes with this position of leadership, but you also realize that with this honor you are assuming a serious responsibility, consequently we ask that you as Charter Members take the following pledge:

"I sincerely promise to uphold the high ideals of Christian Art upon which the National Catholic Theatre Conference is based;

"I promise to accept any office or duties which the membership of the Fraternity may confer upon me;

"I promise to work unceasingly to develop myself as a complete theatre person, both technically and artistically;

"I further promise to promote this development in others through the promotion of the Fraternity and its goals;

"I do pledge my loyalty to the Fraternity not only during my College years but throughout my life."

### THIRTY-FIVE INITIATES

One by one, the thirty-five Charter Initiates repeated the pledge and signed the Roll. There was no hesitancy, no moment of indecision. In March and again in June, these college men and women had met to lay the foundation of their honor fraternity. Painstakingly had they worked with their own

(Continued on page fourteen.)

### Emmet Lavery to Receive First Dineen Award

Emmet Lavery, noted Catholic playwright, will be the first recipient of the Father Dineen Award, a newly established honor for outstanding work in the field of Catholic drama.

The award will be presented at the 11th biennial National Catholic Theatre Conference convention to be held in Kansas City, Missouri, June 13-15. A complete story concerning Mr. Lavery and the award will be carried in the March issue of CATHOLIC THEATRE.

## Quincy College Announces Workshop in Theatre

(Ed. Note: *This, in our humble estimation, is one of best moves in the right direction on-the-move at the present time. Sister Directors who read this article are urged, prodded, pounded to bring the news of the workshop to the attention of Superiors who are charged with assigning Sisters to summer sessions.*)

Rev. Victor Hermann, OFM, Dean of Quincy College, makes this official announcement of the workshop:

Father Elric, of our department of speech, recently conceived the idea that we could be of great help to Sisters who are charged with the duties of presenting annual class plays and dramatic skits of all kinds—a workshop in drama with a chance to learn more about the work and even to prepare the plays and skits for the next school year.

"Our workshop opens Sunday evening, June 16 (immediately after the Catholic Theatre Conference meetings at Kansas City), and closes Sunday, June 22. The fee for the entire workshop, including everything—lectures, room, meals—is \$40.00. An additional fee of \$10.00 will be charged for those who desire to earn two hours credit in dramatic problems for the workshop.

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"There is an additional advantage for those who desire to attend the workshop. Our own summer session has been postponed one week to Monday, June 24. This will close Friday, August 2. We have available special housing facilities reserved for Sisters only. Meals are served daily in the college cafeteria. Masses are said each morning from six to eight o'clock in the College chapel."

Quincy is just 200 miles EAST of Kansas City and is located on the Burlington Route.

The workshop is geared to meet directly the needs of Sister teachers, who, having no formal training in theatre, are nevertheless charged with the task of the annual play or the assembly programs.

Play analysis, production fundamentals, technical problems, casting, and play rehearsals comprise the workshop. Actual work will be done on three one-act plays to be produced at the end of the week. If there is sufficient demand, alternate courses in choral speaking, oral interpretation, and/or advanced directing will be offered.

Staffing the workshop are specialists well-qualified to teach this type of telescoped course. They are:

Rev. Elric Warwick, OFM—B.S. ed., M.F.A.—Director of Workshop, Play Analysis, Production Fundamentals, Director of One-act Play.

Rev. Thomas Brown, OFM—B.S. ed., M.F.A.—Set Design, Scenery Construction.

Mr. Hugh Fitzgerald, Ph.B., M.A.—Play Analysis, Production Fundamentals, Technical Problems, Costuming, Director of One-act Play.

Mr. William Callaban—A.B., M.A.—Play Analysis, Production Fundamentals, Technical Problems, Make-up, Lighting, Director of One-act Play.

Mr. William Reilly—Associateship of Guild Hall School of Music and Drama; London, England—Acting, Production Fundamentals, Make-up.

Further inquiries may be addressed to:

Rev. Elric Warwick, O.F.M.

Quincy College

Quincy, Illinois

### NEW JERSEY AREA SPORTS BI-MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Area Representative Rev. Gabriel Stapleton, S.D.S., Mother of the Savior Seminary, Blackwood, New Jersey, sets forth the purposes of his Area Newsletter in his editorial for the first issue:

"This Newsletter is dedicated to the task of uniting the forces of Catholic Theatre in New Jersey by: 1) Exchanging news and information; 2) Publicizing one another's productions; 3) Providing critical reviews of productions upon request; and 4) Supplying news items to the *National Catholic Theatre Bulletin*.

Father Stapleton has good reason to be proud of his New Jersey area. Membership in NCTC has just exactly doubled since his assignment as Area representative last April.

## *From the President's Desk . . .*

Happy news! Sara Spencer, NCTC member and Editor of the Advisory Board of the Children's Theatre Press, Cloverlot, Anchorage, Kentucky, has informed me that she is going to donate to the Conference library copies of all the plays published by her company.

May we encourage our members to read these fine plays—and better still, to produce them? We can, thus, in a very tangible way, show our gratitude for Mrs. Spencer's largess.

This seems an appropriate time to inform our directors that the NCTC library has been almost completely revised in the past year. Many new plays have been purchased and Mrs. Christopher Wyatt and Sister Mary Ruth, I.H.M., are to be acknowledged again as our benefactors. Mrs. Wyatt has taken on the chore of revitalizing our holdings by checking through lists, play catalogues and ordering many new plays while Sister Mary Ruth is responsible for the complete cataloguing and for honoring your requests so promptly. May we remind you of the library regulations: NCTC Library, 2070 Live Oak Drive, Los Angeles, Calif.

Three plays are sent at one time. However, it is well to ask for more—as many as 10—in the event that some are out on loan. It is well, too, to indicate order of preference so that Librarian can give you plays in order needed. There are times when you may be disappointed to learn that all your requested plays are out on loan. We try to keep an adequate supply on hand, based upon requests of the past years. However, drama directors frequently become interested in the same play at the same time causing a situation over which we have no control. This disappointment will also serve to remind you of the necessity of returning books on time. To hold these for an unreasonable period of time is a lack of consideration of other Conference members.

One more note. The Editors of CATHOLIC THEATRE are eager to receive and to print articles and news but they would like these releases before they are "stale." Please cooperate with them and send all correspondence to College of St. Mary of the Springs, Columbus, Ohio.

*Sister Mary Angelita, B.V.M.*

The first Sunday of each month is NCTC Sunday. Will you give the conference and its needs a special remembrance in your Mass and Holy Communion on that Day?

## **National Convention Kansas City, June, '57**

After a long and exciting business meeting in Chicago with the various Convention Chairmen and the National Board of Directors, the program and activities for the National Convention in Kansas City have taken final shape.

It has been the principal aim of convention planners to design a program which will suit everybody. This is a large order, but the program as it has emerged promises to fill the bill. It offers individual sessions planned to stimulate each of the interest groups in the Conference: teachers and administrators, college students, and high school students. And with such a varied program for its members, the Conference expects to welcome an overflowing crowd in Kansas City.

Already travel reservations for the convention have been made by many groups, the North Central Region setting the pace with 400 students and directors making reservations on the special train from St. Paul. This energetic contingent from the North Central Region has also made hotel reservations in Kansas City, an example which all those determined to attend the convention might follow since, in the event of an overflow crowd, late comers will have to be refused accommodations.

### **FOR THOSE WHO LIKE INFORMALITY**

Of the sessions planned specifically for teachers and administrators, a series of informal meetings dealing with teaching methods should prove enticing. It has often been said that the best thing about conventions is in the informal get-togethers in corridors and coffee shops, when teachers with similar interests and problems can swap their experiences and know-how. Well, the K. C. convention hopes to facilitate this informal exchange of ideas by providing comfortable conference rooms and time on the program for just such get-togethers. These sessions will go by the title of "Round Tables"—but don't let the title throw you. If informality is what you like, you will find it at these sessions. A Chairman and a small group of teachers will be especially prepared in each of these meetings to start the ball rolling; but after that, everyone gets into the act.

Convention planners have tapped various resources to discover some of the areas in which directors and teachers like to "hash over" the pros and cons of their teaching methods. The following five have been chosen as topics likely to engender a lively exchange of ideas:

1. "Actors are Taught, Not Born"
2. "Teaching Play Directing: In the Classroom or the Workshop?"

*(Continued on page fifteen.)*



## Report of the National Catholic Theatre Conference

(Editor's Note: This is the official report of NCTC activities and projects as presented by President, Sister Mary Angelita, B.V.M., to the Executive and Advisory Board Meeting of the American Educational Theatre Association, at their recent national convention in Chicago, December, 1956. AETA has for the past two years given official recognition to NCTC as a sister organization, and has extended to NCTC every consideration and courtesy as well as genuine interest, particularly in the area of secondary schools projects.)

The following account is that of activity during the period from December, 1955, through December, 1956.

### MEMBERSHIP

National Catholic Theatre Conference now has approximately 600 members, showing an increase of almost 100 members during the past year. These include colleges, universities, high schools, seminaries, community theatres and children's theatres.

Student memberships now total 2,100. Of these, 1,800 represent high school students and 300 represent college and university students. The student membership represents 40 high schools and 17 colleges.

### DRAMA ACTIVITIES

During the past year, the following activities were sponsored by the Conference:

- 12 Regional Meetings
- 2 College Theatre Days
- 5 College Drama Festivals
- 1 College Area-Style Workshop
- 1 High School Workshop
- 17 High School Drama Festivals

### SECRETARIAL

Approximately 5,500 letters were received at the Central Office during the past year. This represents an increase of 1,800 over last year. An estimated 6,000 letters have been mailed from our office.

A personal letter of welcome was sent to each new member along with a Bulletin stating the general aims, regulations and types of service.

A new brochure was compiled and distributed to new and prospective members.

A letter was sent to our entire membership introducing a noteworthy series of records, the Spoken Arts Records, which offer fine poetry beautifully presented. We also included a list of records for mood music as compiled by Mrs. Anne Heckin.

(Continued on page thirteen.)

### Father Nagle Scheduled for Theatre Meet

The Rev. Urban Nagle, O.P., founder of the Blackfriars Guild, author and playwright, will be guest speaker at the second annual Catholic Theatre Drama Festival of the Rochester area on Saturday, Feb. 16.

The Festival will be held at Our Lady of Mercy High School. Sister Mary Pius, R.S.M. is chairman.

Two of Father Nagle's plays, OUR LADY OF FATIMA and the Christophers prize-winning CITY OF KINGS were produced in Rochester by the Diocesan Holy Name Union.

A founder of the National Catholic Theatre Conference, Father Nagle is at present chaplain at St. Mary of the Springs, Columbus, Ohio.

The Catholic Theatre Drama Festival, sponsored by the NCTC, will be an all-day affair including plays, lectures, critiques, demonstrations and exhibits.

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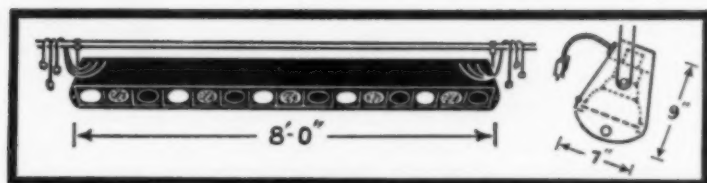
If you will inform us what shows are on your schedule and their performance dates, we shall be glad to send you Costume Plots of these plays and our estimate for furnishing the costumes. Be sure your costumes come from Brooks—then you will get the best, and at no higher cost!

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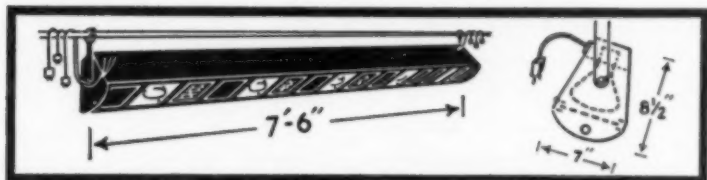
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The time is anytime of persecution by tyrants. The place is any place on the borderline of an Iron Curtain country. The action takes place in the cellar of an old mansion owned by an aged widowed Baroness, who is a patriotic, courageous Christian that believes loyalty to God comes before all other loyalties. She helps those persecuted suffering souls who are fleeing from Iron Curtain . . . territories . . . among them being a NUN, PRIEST, DOCTOR, WRITER and HOUSE-wife. The Baroness' nephew being a Red sympathizer brings about some tense moments.

The story of persecutions, escapes, and hopes of the future make dramatic points of the play. The friend of all lovers, "Dan Cupid" seems to be around as a romance develops between the DOCTOR and the WRITER, Consuelo. The Baroness' faithful companion and housekeeper, Hilda, brings much wit and good humor for comedy relief.

The story is based on incidents that not only have hap-

pened but are still taking place in many parts of the world. to millions of people.

Throughout the story is the theme of the battle between good and evil . . . the spiritual battle to save souls between Christianity and anti-Christianity, and the golden thread of hope and remedy for the ills of the world, the peace message of the century from the Mother of God, the Queen of Peace, taken from the apparitions of St. Catherine Laboure at Paris, the Children of LaSalette, Bernadette of Lourdes and the youthful shepherds of Fatima.

It is an original story that has inspiration besides entertainment and will leave a lasting impression upon the memory of all audiences.

It is, indeed, food for thought for all patriotic citizens who realize that eternal vigilance is the price of liberty. It is spiritual food for those souls who seek truth and it may serve as a warning to all who value their God-given rights and freedom. It also may well serve as a torch of truth carrying the message of "WATCH AND PRAY" and THE MESSAGE OF THE CENTURY. For further information contact MARY PRODUCTIONS.



# COLLEGE CALL BOARD



## RAVEN THEATRE GUILD

Past and Futures for the Raven Theatre Guild, Saint Benedict's College, Atchison, Kansas, as reported by its Director, Rev. Bede J. Bradley, OSB:

DIAL M FOR MURDER, CHRISTMAS ON THE VILLAGE SQUARE, and a most successful Drama Day for the colleges of the Kansas City area finished off 1956 with kudos for all concerned.

The new year looks equally promising and ambitious with performances of BLITHE SPIRIT, Feb. 17-19; a Shakespearean production, March 24-26; and FATHER MALACHY'S MIRACLE, May 5-7.

St. Benedict's likewise is well represented in *Alpha Gamma Omega*, and promises a sizeable delegation at the convention in Kansas City in June.

## MUNDELEIN ANNOUNCES

The Laetare Players of Mndelein College, Chicago, under the direction of Sister Mary Jeanelle, BMV, finished off the old year with a one-act play directed by Senior Marcia Kelley, and with participation in the annual Christmas cantata and the traditional candle-lighting ceremony. As a grand finale, four Laetare Players—Mary Ann Cashman, Dolores Ferraro, Marcia Kelley, and Ellen Schoen—were initiated as Charter Members of NCTC's new Collegiate Dramatic Fraternity.

1957 gets off to a flying start with the production on February 3 and 4, of the Chicagoland premiere of Agatha Christie's thriller, THE MOUSETRAP.

Laetare Junior Players, Ellen Schoen and Marythomas Helgeson are co-directing a one-act play for Feb. 28.

(Reporter: Dolores Ferraro, Pres., Laetare Players)

## CALDWELL COLLEGE HOSTS HENRI GHEON SYMPOSIUM

A great program honoring a great Catholic dramatist is shaping up under the direction of Rev. Robert O'Connell, S.J., for presentation on Sunday, March 3, at Caldwell College. With an expert on Gheon heading the Symposium in preparation by members of the Kilmer Literary Club of St. Peter's and the students of Caldwell, and with the production of a Gheon one-act, the day promises to be challenging and inspirational.

(News note from New Jersey Newsletter).

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## MARY PRODUCTIONS THEATRE GROUP AND SCRIPT DEPARTMENT

Thanks to many interested people we sent out over two hundred scripts of *ST. NICHOLAS AND THE CROWN*, and over one hundred groups produced this half hour playlet. Our mimeograph volunteer, Nicholas Blauvelt, worked overtime getting out many scripts on *ST. NICHOLAS . . .* and *JOY TO THE WORLD*, a play about the Nativity. *ST. NICHOLAS* was produced in Hawaii, the Philippines, Japan, England, Canada, and many places in the United States. Some of the groups putting it on were . . . La Salette Seminary, in Brewster, Mass., Sister Maricita of the St. George Convent, New Ulm, Minnesota, Sr. M. Beatrice, Minot, North Dakota, Mary Barra of Oglesby, Illinois, and many others too numerous to mention.

A special girl scout play was produced by the scouts at St. Mary's in Dumont, N.J. This was called the *CHOIR REHEARSAL*. This was one of our scripts also.

The Mary Production moppets presented a play at Church of the Annunciation in Paramus, New Jersey called *CHRISTMAS SHOPPING*, and some monologues by Mary-Eunice called *STAR OVER BETHLEHEM* and *TRIMMING THE CHRISTMAS TREE*.

The MARY PRODUCTION group is now rehearsing scenes from the TV film script . . . *TEKAWITHA* to be presented in February.

### What? When? Where? BELLE MASQUERS

The Belle-Masque Society of Cascia Hall, Tulsa, Oklahoma, presented *THE SONG OF BERNADETTE* on December 2 and 3. It was presented on the Monte Cassino Auditorium stage. Two one-act plays, *ARIA DA COPO* and *WHEN THE FIRES DIE* will be presented sometime in February.

\* \* \* \*

Mount Marty High School, Yankton, South Dakota, has three one-acts to "take the boards" in February, *ROMANCE OF THE WILLOW PATTERN*, *EARLY FROST*, and *AH, ROMANCE!* The Players Club, Mt. Marty Chorus, and the Mt. Marty College Laboratory School (1st to 3rd grades) are laying plans for the spring production of *BABES IN TOYLAND*. Sister M. Jeanne, O.S.B., is Moderator.

\* \* \* \*

Anna Helen Reuter sends word that Immaculata High School, Chicago, will present *RAMSHACKLE INN* February 22 to March 2. There will be a matinee for Sisters on March 2 at 1:30 p.m.

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## MOPPET THEATRE

The ninth annual children's play, *The Last of the Leprechauns*, was presented by The College of St. Teresa, Kansas City, Missouri, February 18-22. The fairy tale was written by Sister Marcella Marie, C.S.J., with the musical score for the lyrics by Sister de La Salle, C.S.J., both faculty members of the College. Nearly 2,000 children attended the five performances.

The play has two settings: a forest and a throne room. A cast of nine character roles and a chorus of leprechaun dancers and singers include Witzzy, the leader of the leprechauns; Cathy, a 15-year-old princess; Lady Grabitall, the villainess; Clementine, her daughter; Blowmuch, the pompous herald of the palace; King Noblehart, a king too old to rule; his son, Prince Michael; Flimflip, the French ballet master, and Nora, the old nurse. The play was directed by Sister M. Felice, C.S.J.

*Sister Mary James Elmer, B.V.M., Mount St. Gertrude Academy, Boulder, Colorado has accepted the Regional Chairman job for the Mountain Area.*

### REGIONAL FESTIVALS

The Saint Mary College, Xavier, Kansas, will sponsor the West Central Regional Invitational Play Festival on March 9 at Xavier—just two miles south of Leavenworth.

The Kansas City local play festival will be held Feb. 23 at Loretto Academy. Sister Sarah Maureen, S.L., is in charge of arrangements.

Feb. 16 is the date set for the second annual Play Festival for high schools of the Omaha area. It will be held again this year at the College of St. Mary, Omaha. Sister Mary Jean, R.S.M., is in charge.

# FILMS AND FILMSTRIPS FOR

by SISTER MARY AN

Ed. note: *The following "paper" was given by Sister Mary Angelita, B.V.M., at the American Educational Theatre Conference Convention, held at the Conrad Hilton Hotel, Chicago, December 28-30.*

Training in drama is essentially a personal process; however, since teenagers are definitely visually concerned, the action portrayed to them vividly on the motion picture screen impresses them much more deeply than the immobility of the printed page or the evanescent words of a teacher in class. The double sense impression of hearing and seeing dramatic techniques results normally in a more vital and lasting concept. Moreover, since motion pictures are intrinsically connected with the idea of entertainment in the adolescent mind, youngsters are more receptive to them than they are to the ordinary classroom technique.

Carefully selected films provide patterns for several phases of training in drama—pantomime, voice, basic stage movement, make-up, interpretation. The clue to the successful use of motion pictures as instructional adjuncts in the teaching of drama lies, of course, primarily in the selection of the right film for the desired goal. Scarcely less important is the matter of preparing students to draw from the film the special value which it holds for them. A carefully prepared conditioning of the student is almost always necessary, for a film is no substitute for a good teacher.

During the past few months I have made a fairly intensive search to find material which would be helpful to a secondary teacher in theatre arts. The results will be found on the removable pages included in this issue of CATHOLIC THEATRE.

## VALUE OF MARCEL MARCEAU FILM

Without a doubt, my happiest find was the Marcel Marceau film on pantomime which is available on 16 Mm. film from Film Center, Incorporated, right here in Chicago. VARIETY states, "Marceau can be likened to no other entertainer. . . . Obviously it's an act that benefits by camera close-up." Walter Kerr in the New York HERALD TRIBUNE wrote, "M. Marceau really explains where the theatre came from, why it is going to last for a very long time, and why we like it. Marceau should be snared with one of his own imaginary butterfly nets and trapped inside the proscenium of an American theatre for an entire season, and perhaps the rest of his natural life."

Of the various films available on make-up, I would consider as extremely helpful a film from the University of California on *Make-up for the Theatre*. Another from Wisconsin University's Audio-Visual Department, *Straight and Old Age Make-up*, is of equal assistance. Finally, Minnesota University's

*Character Make-up for Men* will complement the basic make-up films. Surely any teacher who is pressed for time will appreciate the skill and directness of these aids in teaching stage make-up.

## RESTORATION PERIOD

Another especially fine film for those concerned with teaching theatre is a reel from Yale University entitled *Techniques in Stylistic Movement for Use in Plays of the Restoration Period*. Students will enjoy doing the movements along with the film and should profit from the excellent instruction presented. And if a teacher is doing a Restoration period play, this movie will be an invaluable aid in saving time and energy involved in historical research.

Other films for special needs are indicated on the annotated list prepared for you. The American Educational Theatre Association has a detailed list of films and film strips which may be used in teaching theatre, available in various issues of the Educational Theatre Journal.

Stanley McIntosh, the Executive Director of Teaching Films Custodians, an organization sponsored by member companies of the Motion Picture Association of America, has for some time hoped to release pictures which would show different types of skill in acting in motion pictures. The only fulfillment of this dream was one series entitled *Understanding Movies*. Its purpose is to point out by excellent illustration direction, acting, photography, editing, art and music as they effect a good motion picture.

Mr. McIntosh conferred with Father Hartke on the possibility of excerpting certain dance sequences from Warner Brothers *Look for the Silver Lining* for use in teaching the "soft shoe" and "buck and wing" routines since the film had the pure steps, tastefully done, but the studio would not agree at the time of the proposal. This suggestion of Mr. McIntosh seems eminently worthwhile, and would be worthy of a few more tries.

Mr. McIntosh has very generously offered to work out a relationship with a committee of the American Educational Theatre Association and the National Catholic Theatre Conference in trying to explore the wants of our joint groups and then attempting to supply these needs.

## FILMSTRIPS

Filmstrips are, of course, less expensive than 16 Mm. films, and are very worthwhile as an investment for a drama group. New strips which offer very practical helps are entitled: *Basic Stage Movement*, a series of three film strips designed to teach the young actor the principles by which the movements of a character on the stage can be used to express his



# FOR CLASSES IN DRAMATICS

ARY ANGELITA, B.V.M.

motives, to build up his importance, and to relate him to other characters. Another comparatively new film strip is *Make-up for the Stage*. This strip also covers the use of Latex and Derma Wax, and is accompanied by explanatory literature.

## BASIC STAGE LIGHTING

The newest film strip I have had an opportunity to pre-view is *Basic Stage Lighting*, a simple but comprehensive film strip covering enough material to enable one to light the stage satisfactorily. These film strips are available from Paramount Cosmetics for rental or purchase, and are all accompanied by excellent explanatory literature.

The question may arise as to how to procure films for teaching theatre arts. On the list which has been prepared, names of principal distributors of films have been indicated. These distributing agencies will be happy to send on request catalogues which give general characteristics of films and price. In addition, inquiry can also be addressed to audio-visual departments of state and other universities.

## MOVING PICTURE FILM

Survey of the leisure-time activities of American high school students shows them to be enthusiastic movie-goers. High school students account for more than five million of the movie attendants every week. Even if these figures are not strictly accurate, they are large enough to make one thing clear: Motion pictures are a matter of concern to educators. An increasing number of schools are, accordingly, devoting attention to motion picture appreciation. The schools are recognizing more and more fully the responsibility they have in respect to the elevation in cultural and social standards of film production by developing discerning and discriminating tastes among young people.

The ethics of a film are determined by what it makes the

viewer feel about right or wrong; for example, it should not attempt to teach that war and slavery are wrong—philosophical treatises do that—it must make people feel these things are wrong and must make them feel like avoiding them. Assuredly, some films might have a deleterious influence on teen-age-viewers.

What source of evaluation of films are available to the serious film-goer? Reputable periodicals supply information relative to the ethical and moral value of films, and in some cases to the artistic and technical qualities of pictures. Educational and Recreational Guides, Incorporated, listed in the substitute material, will supply illustrated guides to films of particular interest. Such an illustrated guide was prepared for *War and Peace* to aid in the enrichment of those who viewed the film.

For Catholics, the Legion of Decency evaluates films on a moral basis.

## EVALUATION

*Estimates of Current Motion Pictures* has been published for many years by the Motion Picture Association of America, 28 West 44th Street, New York. Every week representatives of national organizations preview a new picture and write their individual reactions based on its entertainment values, artistic and technical excellence, and ethical and social values. These reviews are pooled, a composite paragraph written, and a list of movies is presented as films suitable for family, adults or children.

Even the library records for readers of all ages show an increased interest in important books after they have appeared on the screen. Contemporary interest in *Moby Dick* and *War and Peace* have been greatly stimulated by the recent film versions of these books. Books of the past become the books of today as a result of good film production.

We have considered in this brief discussion the newer and more useful educational films available for the theatre arts teacher, the way they may be secured, and a guidance in the selection of commercial films.

In conclusion, it should be said that, ideally, any film material which would be of particular value to a drama teacher should be close-ups of great craftsmen at work, e.g., Jo Mielziner; or work-in-progress from all fields of theatre as reported and interpreted by the people who did the work. Clips from great films which may reveal the actor's art; the director's art; the cameraman's art; and maybe the writer's art, too, would be of inestimable value to the theatre arts teacher for education flourishes best when the drama students enjoy their educational activities; and pupils are most likely to enjoy those activities which help them to do more appreciatively those worthwhile things which they are going to continue to do throughout life.

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## CATHOLIC THEATRE ANNUAL — 1956

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## REGIONAL REPORTS

**NORTH CENTRAL REGION:** Chairman Sister Mary Charitas, C.S.J., reporting—On January 3, the Twin City Drama directors met at St. Agnes High School, St. Paul, for a business and social get-together at the invitation of Sister M. Patrice, S.S.N.D., Director at St. Agnes High School. Others present were: Brother William, F.S.C., of Cretin High School, Mrs. A. McCauley representing Visitation Academy, St. Paul, Sisters Mary Ruth and Annella of St. Margaret's Academy, Sister Maria Pius of St. Anthony High School, Minneapolis.

Sister Charitas, Chairman of the North Central Region, reviewed Convention developments for the Kansas City June Biennial Meeting, bringing the directors up-to-date on what's what in the Conference Conventions plans for June 13-15.

Plans were further discussed as to the housing of the 400 delegates who are now signed for the Rock Island "Special" trip to Kansas City on June 12 from the Twin City area.

A brief report was also given by Sister Charitas of the joint Speech and American Educational Theatre Conventions held in Chicago, December 26-30 and attended by Sister Annella and Sister Charitas together with the mid-year Executive Board Meeting of the National Catholic Theatre Conference. Directors in the St. Paul-Minneapolis Section will continue their work in the Catholic High Schools until all plans have been completed for an all-out response to the NCTC Convention call.

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## Requiescat In Pace

Dr. Robert Bachmann, writer of the play, **MIRACLE AT LOURDES**, and author of the article, "The Doctor Writes a Play," published in **CATHOLIC THEATRE**, January, 1957, died on January 5, (first Saturday!) in New York City. He suffered a heart attack early that morning and the end came in less than fifteen minutes.

## What? When? Where?

Maria High School, Chicago, presented **SEVEN NUNS AT LAS VEGAS** on November 16, 17, and 18. Mrs. Joseph Suaris directed.

\* \* \* \*

Girls Central High School, Butte, Montana, has had a busy semester under the direction of Sister Margaret Marie. Students from Girls Central and Boys Central produced **TIME OUT FOR GINGER** early in November. The Christmas program under the direction of Sister Mary Alicia and Sister Margaret Marie featured Roy Ringwald's **A CHRISTMAS CRIB**. First year speech students are at work on **SLEEPING BEAUTY OF LORELAND** which will be this year's Children's Theatre performance. The music department has selected **FINIAN'S RAINBOW** as its major production under the direction of Sister Mary Alicia. Staging and speaking parts are under the direction of Sister Mary Seraphine.

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*All news items intended for publication in the JUNE issue of  
CATHOLIC THEATRE must be in the Editorial Office, College  
of St. Mary of the Springs, Columbus, Ohio, BEFORE May 1.*

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## Community Corner

By FATHER ANTHONY ZOGHBY

### TRAGEDY!

No new group to introduce now!

VERY POOR response from our INDEPENDENT Theatres!

It seems that *Moppet Theatre*, *Teen Theatre*, and all educational and institutional Theatre, even College and Professional Theatre are more cooperative than our own Community, Parish and Independent groups.

I am grateful to Mary-Eunice Sayrahder and Joseph Spagnola of MARY PRODUCTIONS for their prompt cooperation; and to Bob Smett and his friends of the vibrant and wonderful CATHOLIC THEATRE in Rochester; and to John Weaver and all the "friars" of the DAYTON BLACKFRIARS' GUILD (they publish "The Friarcracker!")

These three fine COMMUNITY THEATRE groups responded, but only these three, and, of course, our own Mobile Theatre Guild.

But, if Catholic Community Theatre is going to have any unified force and if it is to make any impression on the general American Theatre Scene, we certainly need interest, effort and cooperation of more than four groups.

It seems to me that the Amphi-theatres, arenas and stages born in pre-Christian days and having an early pagan flourish among the Greeks and Romans, became such violent sights of blood and torture during the Christian Persecutions, that Christian reverence and respect left those areas bare for awhile, to let the blood be washed away by the rain and the heat of violence be cooled by the passing of gentle time. But when Theatre was restored it was restored by the Church with Mystery plays, Miracle Plays and Morality Plays—the birth of Modern Theatre. Modern Theatre is a child of the Church. But the child has grown very big and gone far astray. It is sort of natural for the growing child to go astray . . . that is, natural since the fall of our First Parents, anyhow. It's up to the mother to keep her child trained on the right path. But Holy Mother Church works through people, human beings. God established the Church in this way—using the frail human element. Even His own hand-picked twelve had the mark of humanity in the betrayal of Judas, the denial of Peter, the doubting of Thomas, the fear of all in the face of danger and violence until they received the Holy Spirit on PENTECOST Sunday!

The Church has not failed Modern Theatre, but modern theatre has failed the Church. Christianity has in it all of the truths and principles necessary to make Theatre great. But Modern Theatre, particularly Modern American Theatre is almost consumed with moral Cancer. America's "Leading"

and Prize-winning Playwrights seem obsessed with sex and obscenity, with materialism and cynicism, etc. The authors of most of the Broadway hits in recent years have been men who are agnostics, atheists, rationalists, and un-Christian—at least in practice if not in theory. We have a Legion of Decency for Movies, and Cardinal Spellman himself made an impressive attack on the wretched movie *BABY DOLL*, written by Broadway's Tennessee Williams and directed by Broadway's Kazan! All that in the name of "REALISM" is a lie. I, as a man born and raised in the Deep South know. He has written a whole string of plays about the Deep South which is populated with people who are abnormal, insane, sex-obsessed, etc. UNREAL! We have a few non-conformists and strange characters in the Deep South, but they are the EXCEPTION in reality and the RULE in reality.

It is on the part of our Catholic Theatres to answer this vast majority of un-Christian Theatre leaders in America. No doubt about it, they are the leaders. Their records of hits and prizes prove that. It doesn't prove that they write the best plays or produce the best shows, but it does prove that they exert the most influence on America and American Theatre. And the answer is not to simply condemn them and take a negative approach of NO and NOT!!! Without a doubt they must be condemned and they deserve the NO's and NOT's, but this only spurs them on. What we *really* need is to meet them on their OWN ground, to produce writers, directors, producers, performers, etc., who will cross swords with them and BEAT them!

Let us produce writers who can record dialogue more electric than that of Tennessee Williams and more searching than that of William Inge or John Van Druten; writers who can write stronger tragedy than Arthur Miller or Eugene O'Neill; directors with more to give and get from performers, with more vitality than Kazan or Logan. Surely we have men with brains and talent—where are they?

Are we Community Theatres doing our job? Are we "spending and being spent?" Are we avoiding lethargy and inertia? Do we make comfortable excuses for procrastinating? Why have only three groups answered our *Urgent Plea* for some response? You don't think it will do any good? YOU DON'T KNOW if it will or not. We must make ourselves heard! You never know WHO will pick up a copy of the NCTC Bulletin and be influenced. God's grace can work MIRACLES. He can put the Catholic Theatre publication in the right hands and your name before the right eyes at just the right moment! He can infuse the right impulse in the right brain! But you have to make enough effort to scatter ideas! Give signs of being ALIVE and AWAKE!

CATHOLIC COMMUNITY THEATRES, AWAKE.  
FOR GOD'S SAKE, AWAKE!

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## Report of NCTC

(Continued from page four.)

### EDITORIAL

The official monthly bulletin of the National Catholic Theatre Conference, CATHOLIC THEATRE, now has a circulation of over 3,000.

Approximately 1,000 copies of our annual, CATHOLIC THEATRE '56, were distributed free of charge to all members.

A Regional Chairman's Handbook was compiled by Sister Mary Charitas, C.S.J., and distributed to regional chairmen and area representatives.

A directory of membership was distributed to all members.

A list of approximately 400 recommended One-Act plays has been mailed to all new members. A similar list of Three-Act plays was also mailed to new members.

### REPRESENTATION

The National Catholic Theatre Conference is represented by the President on the Advisory Board of the AETA. The Conference holds membership in AETA, ANTA, Children's Theatre Conference, National Theatre Association and the Catholic Broadcaster's Association.

The President represented the National Catholic Theatre Conference at: Regional Conferences in Milwaukee, Omaha, Dubuque, and Blackwood, New Jersey; Play Festivals in Chicago and Eau Claire, Wisconsin; the AETA Convention in Los Angeles; and the CTC Convention in Evanston, Illinois.

### LIBRARY

The National Catholic Theatre Conference Library which handles over 1,500 plays, published and unpublished, is maintained at Immaculate Heart College in Los Angeles. Our Library was completely revised during the past year. Eight hundred new books have been added.

### CURRENT PROJECTS

Plans are being formulated for presentation of a Dineen Dramatic Award in memory of Rev. F. C. Dineen, S.J., one of the founders of the Conference.

Plans for our 11th Biennial Convention, which will be held June 13, 14 and 15, 1957 in Kansas City, Missouri, are well underway. Initial publicity has been mailed to all members. Special trains will depart from various cities for the convention. An attendance of at least 1,500 is anticipated.

The National Catholic Honorary Dramatic Fraternity has been inaugurated for the purpose of promoting greater activity among college members. The original initiation of select groups and individuals is being conducted this week

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in Chicago. The first national initiation will be held in Kansas City in June. This new organization will fulfill the following functions:

1. Serve to unite colleges and universities in their contribution toward raising the standards of students as well as college and universities in dramatic activities.
2. Provide a means for organized discussion of problems and matters pertinent to betterment and welfare of theatre and drama.
3. Provide special national recognition to worthy individuals and serve as an aid to students and graduates in teacher placement and in finding positions in Catholic professional theatre centers.

The National Catholic Theatre Conference is proud of its affiliation with AETA, and stands ready to give cooperation and assistance in any way possible.

Respectfully submitted,  
Sister Mary Angelita, B.V.M.  
President

### MEETING POSTPONED

The scheduled meeting of the New England Directors at a presentation of the Play for the Season of Christ's Nativity had to be postponed to January 6 because the area had the worst ice storm in thirty-four years. West Hartford and neighboring sections had no light, no heat, and in some places, no water, for forty-eight hours.

Sister Marie Ancilla of St. Joseph's College, Hartford, Connecticut, spent hours telephoning, contacting broadcasting and TV studios seeking announcements to head off people but still some hardy individuals succeeded in reaching the College!

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## Alpha Gamma Omega

(Continued from page one.)

college theatre directors and councillors on the formulation of aims, of resolutions, of functions. This December meeting was simply the climax of a year of planning and a year of dedication.

In the name of the Conference, President Sister Mary Angelita received the pledges and expressed the congratulations of NCTC to this, its first Honors Society. Worthy of special comment is the name which the Drama Fraternity has chosen—Alpha Gamma Omega: From Beginning to End, From God and back to God, through Genesius, the Patron of Christian Theatre Art.

The brief ceremony was over; the Initiates chatted for a moment or two with those who had helped them to reach this day and with those who had come to wish them well; a fresh blue haze enveloped the room; the thirty-five were back at work on the myriad problems attendant upon careful organization. It was noon already, and there was only half a day left to go.

### WHO THEY ARE

Who are these Charter Initiates? NCTC is happy to publish their names in its official publication, CATHOLIC THEATRE. This is who they are:

From St. Benedict College, Atchison, Kansas—

Michael T. Flanagan  
Edward G. Dykla  
Michael Pufall  
Richard Robl

From Mt. St. Scholastica College—

Joan Clem Melancon  
Barbara McRead  
Elma Jean Michieli  
Susan E. Stedman

From the College of St. Teresa—

Twila Hegarty  
Mary McQueeney

From Clarke College, Dubuque, Iowa—

Carol Blitgen  
Evie McElroy

From the College of Saint Mary, Omaha—

Mary Margaret Cacioppo  
Mary Margaret Tanner

From Loretto Heights, College, Denver—

Eleanor Lommel  
Ella Sueper  
Yvonne St. Charles

From St. Louis University, St. Louis—

James D. Evering  
Irving H. Vincent  
Gary Dukoska  
Angelo H. Puricelli

From Mundelein College, Chicago

Dolores Ferraro  
Marcia Kelley  
Mary Ann Cashman  
Ellen Schoen

From St. Mary of the Woods College, Terre Haute, Indiana—

Mary Helen Kelly  
Camille Rezuko  
Lolly Trauscht  
Jean Smith

From Fontbonne College, St. Louis—

Margaret Quigley

From Webster College, Webster Groves, Mo.—

Rosemary Pisani  
Margaret Reilly

From Mount Mary College, Milwaukee—

Patricia Goggins  
Barbara Bohmann  
Marilyn V. Noesen

### THE GUIDING OFFICERS

Of equal interest to the NCTC membership will be the roster of officers and the listing of special committees together with their chairmen.

*Alpha Gamma Omega presents:*

*President:* Michael T. Flanagan, St. Benedict's . . . . . Senior

*Vice-Pres.:* Irving Vincent, St. Louis U. . . . . Senior

*Recording Sec'y:* Carol Blitgen, Clarke C. . . . . Junior

*Corresponding Sec'y:* Barbara McLeod

Mt. St. Scholastica C. . . . . Senior

*Treasurer:* Angelo Puricello, St. Louis U. . . . . Junior

*Historian:* Mary Helen Kelly, St. Mary of the Woods . Junior

*Parliamentarian:* Margaret Quigley, Fontbonne . . . . . Junior

Chairmen of Special Committees:

*Initiation Arrangements at Kansas City:* Twila Hegarty, Junior, College of St. Teresa.

*Initiation Ritual: Pins: Membership Cards: Charter Scrolls—*Ellen Schoen, Junior, Mundelein College.

*Individual Point and Chapter Requirements:* Eleanor Lommel, Senior, Loretto Heights, College.

*Individual and Chapter Membership Applications:* Evie McElroy, Senior, Clarke College.

*Correspondence, Publicity, and Handbook:* Mary Helen Kelly, Junior, St. Mary of the Woods.

*Constitution and By-Laws:* Co-Chairmen—Dolores Ferraro, Senior, Mundelein; Angelo Puricelli, Junior, St. Louis University.

CATHOLIC THEATRE editors look forward to regular contributions to the publication from members of *Alpha Gamma Omega*.

All members of NCTC look forward to meeting these honored Charter Initiates at the Convention in Kansas City, June 13-16.



## National Convention

(Continued from page three.)

3. "Teaching Theatre History; Groundwork for Theatre Practice"
4. "Developing Techniques in Student Playwrights"
5. "Teaching Technical Crafts; Floor Plan to Production"

So, come all ye teachers, notes under arm. The Muehlebach Hotel will furnish pleasant surroundings in which you can ask one another, "How do *you* teach it?"

### RESOURCE MEETINGS PLANNED

Along the same informal lines as the Round Tables will be larger group meetings which will aim at solving some of the knotty problems that bedevil all of us in the theatre. Sparking the discussions will be groups of hand picked experts who may come up with just the solutions we are looking for, or on the other hand, may unearth problems we never even realized existed.

Again an attempt has been made to choose topics for discussion which will be provocative and stimulating, with emphasis particularly on current problems. With the question of morality and censorship so alive in our minds right now, we will welcome an opportunity to discuss "Art and Morality in the Theatre." Since choosing next year's plays is always a problem lurking in the backs of our minds over the summer, many directors will enter wholeheartedly into the discussion of "Plays for '58: Toward a Play List for Your Needs." College directors who are constantly being asked by their students, 'how can we start a community Theatre,' will be anxious to share in the give and take of a discussion on "Community Theatre Planning and Management." And everyone interested in seeing the goals of NCTC take shape in concrete form will want to know more about "The Development and Management of Regional Activities in NCTC."

Added to these more informal types of discussions planned for the convention will be two panel discussions geared specifically to interest teachers and administrators on both the high school and college levels. These panels, whose speakers have been chosen for the expert contributions they can make on the subjects, will deal with "The High School Theatre in the School System" and "The Development of College Drama Departments."

### SPECIAL LECTURE

Of particular interest to those schools involved in building and equipping new theatres will be a special lecture by Dr. Theodore Fuchs of Northwestern University. Dr. Fuchs is nationally recognized as an eminent authority on the efficient and economical equipping of a theatre plant. Dr. Fuchs is a strong advocate of the belief that careful and well advised pre-planning will eliminate many of

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the after-woes of theatre builders. We look forward to his lecture as a most practical and valuable contribution to those of our members interested in equipping the theatre.

### MAKE YOUR RESERVATIONS NOW!

These are some of the exciting programs scheduled exclusively for drama directors and teachers at the National Convention. Subsequent issues of CATHOLIC THEATRE will carry descriptions of other programs of vital interest to members on the college and high school and community theatre levels. So, Drama Director, plan to attend yourself—and let your best students know what is being planned for them at the convention. But we urge you strongly—begin your plans NOW! And, most important—MAKE YOUR HOTEL RESERVATIONS EARLY!

### BETTER SPEECH WEEK

Taking voice modulation as its main point of attack, the Thespians, Our Lady of Mercy High School's dramatic club, Rochester, N. Y., promoted a Better Speech Week, Jan. 9-16.

### WELCOME MAT

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Joseph R. Cain  
Benedictine High School  
1744 Wymore Avenue  
Cleveland 12, Ohio

Sister M. Bede, O.S.B.  
St. Joseph School  
Beatrice, Nebraska

Sister Mary Ann Cecile, C.S.J.  
St. Mary of the Plains High  
School  
Dodge City, Kansas

Sister Ma. Luisa Henson, O.P.  
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